



November 26, 2012

The Honourable Hilary R. Clinton
Secretary of State
United States Department of State
2201 C St, SW
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Secretary Clinton,

Amnesty International USA is deeply dismayed about the situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). We urge you to lead the international community in taking decisive action to try and stop the human rights abuses that are being committed and press all involved parties to ensure the protection of civilians.

Specifically:

- 1. The United States should use its position on the Security Council to ensure that MONUSCO has the resources to protect civilians from further abuse.**

Over 140,000 internally displaced persons in the vicinity of Goma and Sake are in grave danger and in dire need of humanitarian assistance. M23 has an appalling track record of human rights abuses, to include unlawful killings, forced recruitment of young adults and children, forced labor, and rape. Consistent with its mandate, MONUSCO should act decisively to protect civilians, especially internally displaced persons, from harm. With its North Kivu Office in Goma and a base in Sake, MONUSCO must oppose these human rights abuses, particularly in light of increasing reports of abductions, sexual violence, and summary executions of people refusing to collaborate with M23.

- 2. The United States should urge the UNSC to add officials from the Rwandan Ministry of Defence to the list of individuals targeted by the UNSC Sanctions Committee where there is credible evidence of their support for M23. The U.S. should also support a Security Council resolution that would require Rwanda to withdraw its support from the M23 armed group.**

The sanctions list already includes several individuals in M23's command structure. On November 20, 2012, the UN Security Council requested that the Sanctions Committee review the activities of two more M23 commanders, Innocent Kaina and Baudouin Ngaruye, to determine if they or others might fit the criteria for addition to the list. The sanctions list does not yet designate any high ranking officials within the Rwandan Ministry of Defence. It should.

Amnesty International's researchers have found evidence that Rwanda provided recruits and weapons to M23 in July and August, 2012, in violation of the UN arms

embargo. Moreover, according to a recent report by the UN Group of Experts, “Rwandan officials have provided military support to M23 through permanent troop reinforcements and clandestine support through special forces units.” The report continues, “Officers of the Rwandan armed forces have also furnished the rebels with weapons, facilitated the evacuation of casualties to Rwanda and shared communication equipment with M23.” UN investigators found that M23 fighters have been recruited in Rwandan villages, members of other armed groups have joined the rebellion by travelling through Rwandan territory, and members of Rwanda’s ruling party have collected funds for M23. Based on this evidence, we are calling on the United Nations to add officials within the Rwandan Ministry of Defence to the sanctions list where there is credible evidence of their support for M23. Sanctioning these officials may encourage Rwanda to curtail its support of M23 and reduce the group’s capacity to commit serious human rights abuses.

3. The United States should use its influence with the Congolese government to stop human rights violations by the Congolese army and its allied armed groups.

Amnesty International is concerned about risks to civilians during any counter-offensives by the Congolese army, especially given the army’s recent alliances with armed groups known for human rights abuses. If the Congolese army continues to act in concert with these armed groups, then the state should be held accountable for violations of international humanitarian law committed by them, as well as for violations by its own armed forces. There are fresh reports of human rights violations committed directly by the Congolese army in Minova, south of Sake near the front line.

Thank you for your prompt attention to the plight of the Congolese, who are yet again caught in conflict and in urgent need of assistance and protection.

Sincerely,


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Cc: Susan Rice, U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations
Maria Otero, Under Secretary of State for Global Issues
Johnnie Carson, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs
Michael Posner, Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor
Samantha Power, Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director of the Office of Multilateral Affairs and Human Rights National Security Services